

REMARKS

Claims 25 to 41 are pending. Claims 1 to 24 are currently cancelled. Claims 25-41 are currently rejected. Claims 25-36 and 37-41 have been amended to depend from non-cancelled claims. Claim 37 has been amended to depend from claim 25. Claim 25 has been amended to address the clarity objections. Reconsideration of the application is requested. The numeric references in the specification have been corrected and replacement drawings with corrected numeric references are submitted herewith.

OBJECTIONS**Specification**

The specification is objected to because on page 7, line 4-5 and page 8, lines 25 and 28, the terms used for elements "14"; and page 8, lines 28- 29 and page 9, lines 8, 9 and 11 the terms used for elements "50" and "52" are not consistent. Applicant submits that the specification is suitable as amended and reconsideration of the specification is requested.

Claims

Claims 25-41 are objected to because in claim 1, line 8, "their mechanical contact with each other" is confusing and unclear; line 10, "associated to" is unclear. Applicant submits that the claims are suitable as amended and reconsideration of the claims is requested.

35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 26-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being unclear and indefinite because they are depended from cancelled claims. Exception of claim 37 depending from claim 25 only. Based on the foregoing, Applicants submit the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, should be withdrawn.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 25 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Huang (U.S. 6,929,501) (referred to hereinafter as "Huang").

The Office Action essentially states that:

Insofar as the claims can be understood, Huang, Figs. 2-4 show a connector shell 1 for a connector component of a connector arrangement for a wire cable comprising: a housing 11 including first contact elements 122, the housing being provided with at least one first guiding element 124 having an axis for guiding the housing along a second guiding element 211 of a mating connector component 2 of the connector arrangement upon coupling with the mating,

connector component allowing alignment of the first contact elements with mating second contact elements of the mating connector component prior to a mechanical contact with each other, and at least one fastening element 123 associated to the at least one first guiding element and substantially aligned with the axis of the at least one first guiding element for engagement with the second guiding element of the mating connector component.

As to claim 37, Huang shows the mating connector component 2 for connecting to the connector shell 1 comprising at least one second guiding element 211 along which the at least one first guiding element of the housing of the connector shell is guidable, the second guiding element comprising a receiving portion (not labeled) for receiving a portion of the fastener element 123 of the connecting shell.

Applicants respectfully submit that according to MPEP 2131 “[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” (citing *Verdegall Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Claim 25 includes a housing having at least one first guiding element that allows alignment of the first contact elements with mating second contact element of the mating connector component prior to their mechanical contact with each other. (emphasis added)

Huang does not disclose guiding elements that allow alignment of mating contact elements prior to their mechanical contact with each other. As stated in Huang, “the sleeve units 124 of the first electrical connector 1 are sleeved fittingly and respectively on the positioning members 211 of the second electrical connector 2 when the first engaging portion 12 and the second engaging portion 22 are interconnected so as to prevent relative movement between the first and second electrical connectors 1, 2 in a transverse direction of the contact pins 122,” Huang at col. 3, lines 44-50 (emphasis added), and “when the first engaging portion 12 of the first electrical connector 1 is connected to the second engaging portion 22 of the second electrical connector 2, each sleeve unit 124 is fitted on the corresponding positioning member 211 at the same time.” Huang at col. 3, lines 51-55 (emphasis added). Accordingly, the reference does not describe every element of the claimed invention.

For these reasons, Applicants submit that the cited reference will not support a 102(e) rejection of the claims and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 26-41 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang (U.S. 6,929,501).

The Office Action essentially states:

Insofar as the claims can be understood, the features of claims 26-41 (with exception of claim 37 depend form claim 25) would have been obvious of modification of Huang's connector to achieve better result.

Applicants respectfully submit that according to MPEP 2142, to establish a case of *prima facie* obviousness, three basic criteria must be met: 1) there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references or generally known to one skilled in the art, to modify or combine reference teachings, 2) there must be reasonable expectation of success, and 3) the prior art references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The ability to modify the method of the references is not sufficient. The reference(s) must provide a motivation or reason for making the changes. *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide Manufacturing Co.*, 226 USPQ 438 (PTO Bd. App. 1984).

Applicants incorporate by reference their response, above, to the 102(e) rejection of claims 25 and 37 based on Huang and further respectfully submit that Huang cannot support a case of *prima facie* obviousness as to the claims because, among other possible reasons, Huang does not provide a motivation or suggestion for guiding elements that allow alignment of mating contact elements prior to their mechanical contact with each other because the invention of Huang is directed toward a completely different problem. The invention of Huang is directed toward preventing relative movement between, and separation of, the first and second electrical connectors in a transverse direction of the contact pins during use. *See* Huang, e.g., Abstract; col. 1, lines 49-62; col. 2, lines 20-30; and col. 3, line 51 – col. 4, line 2. In addition, Huang does not disclose all the elements of the present invention because it does not disclose guiding elements that allow alignment of mating contact elements prior to their mechanical contact with each other.

For these reasons, Applicants submit that the cited references will not support a 103(a) rejection of the claims and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In addition to the foregoing arguments, Applicants submit that a dependent claim should be considered allowable when its parent claim is allowed. *In re McCarn*, 101 USPQ 411 (CCPA 1954). Accordingly, provided the independent claims are allowed, all claims depending therefrom should also be allowed.

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and 103(a) is requested. Examination and reconsideration of the claims are requested. Allowance of the claims at an early date is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorney if the Examiner believes any remaining questions or issues could be resolved.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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